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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes Los Angeles City College (LACC) records for a six-semester period of students who took the Guidance Examination in fall 1970 and scored in the lowest quintile on both the vocabulary and reading sections of the examination. This score indicated that their reading level was at the eighth-grade level or lower. The students were sent postcards recommending that they enroll in Developmental Communications on the basis of their examination score. Persistence rates and academic statistics indicated that many of these students were assisted by the "remedial" programs and were successful in college. Five tables and two figures provide the study data. (DB)

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LOS ANGELES CITY COLLEGE

"SIX SEMESTER PERSISTENCE STUDY OF STUDENTS RECOMMENDED FOR DEVELOPMENTAL STUDIES, FALL 1970"

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Research Study #74-5

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Research Office
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JC 740 286

"SIX SEMESTER PERSISTENCE STUDY OF STUDENTS RECOMMENDED FOR DEVELOPMENTAL STUDIES, FALL 1970"

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In 1970, after a year of study by a college wide task force, Los Angeles City College instituted a new Guidance Examination for entering students. The new examination consisted of the Vocabulary and Reading Sections of the Cooperative Tests of English Expression, Form 1A and a locally constructed Numerical test. One of the uses of the examination was to recommend placement in Developmental Communications for those students who scored in the lowest quintile (LACC norms) on both the Vocabulary and Reading sections. In raw score terms, these students answered correctly 18 or less of 60 questions in each of the two sections. Estimates indicate that their reading level is at eighth grade or below.

The purpose of this study is to ascertain the academic performance and persistence of these students and thereby assess the efficacy of the placement procedure.

PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY

The computer printout of results of the Fall, 1970 Guidance Examination was scanned to identify "55" (five-five) students, i.e., those scoring in the lowest quintile on both the Vocabulary and Reading sections of the Guidance Examination.

Procedure of the Study (continued)

A 5" x 8" index card was prepared for each "55" student. In addition to descriptive data about the student, academic information for the period Fall, 1970 through Spring, 1973 was summarized on the card. Also, copies of transcripts were prepared for more detailed analysis.

Data were tallied and analyzed as indicated in the next section.

FINDINGS

Perusal of the Fall, 1970 listings of students taking the Guidance Examination produced 533 "55" students, about 11% of those taking the Fall, 1970 examination. Of these 533 students, 115 did not complete registration, while 17 were not first-time students, leaving 401 students included in the study. Examination of transcripts indicated that 89 students completed no work at LACC during the three year period, or, equivalently, 312 students completed some work at LACC over the three year period.

Table 1 indicates sex and high school background of the "55" students and presents comparable figures for all students taking the Fall, 1970 Guidance Examination.

Table 2 indicates persistence rates over the six semester period and also presents for comparison similar statistics for a random sample of 397 day students who entered in Fall, 1967 (from Research Studies #70-9 and 71-11). Also indicated in Table 2 are numbers of students who obtained the AA degree during the six semester period. Figures 1 and 2 present some of the data of Table 2 in graphical form.

FINDINGS (continued)

Table 3 presents some scholarship statistics for "55" students who completed some work (N=312), according to number of semesters completed.

Table 4 indicates numbers of students completing "remedial" courses in Developmental Communications and/or English, while Table 5 indicates grade point averages earned in these and other selected courses.

TABLE 1 - Distributions by Sex and Last High School Attended of "55" Students and Total Taking Guidance Examination, Fall, 1970

High School	Total No. Taking Guidance Exam.			No. of "55" Students			Percent of Total Who are "55"		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1. Belmont	154	137	291	13	7	20	8.4	5.1	6.9
2. Los Angeles	132	155	287	10	29	39	7.6	18.7	13.6
3. Fairfax	118	114	232	5	6	11	4.2	5.3	4.7
4. Marshall	108	107	215	4	5	9	3.7	4.7	4.2
5. Hollywood	80	97	177	6	5	11	7.5	5.2	6.2
6. Manual Arts	69	102	171	16	31	47	23.2	30.4	27.5
7. Dorsey	70	88	158	9	14	23	12.9	15.9	14.6
8. Fremont	64	77	141	23	24	47	35.9	31.2	33.3
9. Washington	47	76	123	11	15	26	23.4	19.7	21.1
10. Crenshaw	50	67	117	11	10	21	22.0	14.9	18.0
11. Hamilton	46	64	110	4	6	10	8.7	9.4	9.1
12. Jefferson	44	50	94	7	18	25	15.9	36.0	26.6
13. Locke	42	39	81	9	11	20	21.4	28.2	24.7
14. Franklin	37	39	76	1	1	2	2.7	2.6	2.6
15. Eagle Rock	39	22	61	2	0	2	5.1	0.0	3.3
16. Jordan	20	36	56	10	7	17	50.0	19.4	30.4
17. Lincoln	29	24	53	2	1	3	6.9	4.2	8.3
18. Roosevelt	21	15	36	0	1	1	0.0	6.7	2.8
19. Wilson	12	21	33	3	0	3	25.0	0.0	9.1
20. University	16	16	32	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTAL LA City	1445	1536	2981	171	214	385	11.8	13.9	12.9
Other California Schls.	330	428	758	9	17	26	2.7	4.0	3.4
Other Western States	48	43	91	4	3	7	8.3	7.0	7.7
West Central States	17	17	34	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Central States	108	74	182	8	4	12	7.4	5.4	6.6
South Central States	60	30	90	6	3	9	10.0	10.0	10.0
Southern States	196	110	306	30	18	48	15.3	16.4	15.7
North Eastern States	145	82	227	4	3	7	2.8	3.7	3.1
Foreign	118	104	222	16	23	39	13.6	22.1	17.6
TOTAL	2467	2424	4891	248	285	533	10.0	11.8	10.9

TABLE 2 - Persistence Comparisons Between Fall, 1970 "55" Entrants and Sample of All Fall, 1967 Entrants
(Percents in parentheses)

		No. Registered	SEMESTER 1	2	3	4	5	6	
No. Completing Semester									
	M	182	141	111	71	57	31	15	
Fall, 1970		(100)	(78)	(61)	(39)	(31)	(17)	(8)	
"55"'s	F	219	171	142	108	89	52	36	
		(100)	(78)	(65)	(49)	(41)	(24)	(16)	
	T	401	312	253	179	146	83	51	
		(100)	(78)	(63)	(45)	(36)	(21)	(13)	
	M	218	196	153	105	83	42	23	
Fall, 1967		(100)	(90)	(70)	(48)	(38)	(19)	(11)	
Sample	F	179	165	131	91	78	48	27	
		(100)	(92)	(73)	(51)	(44)	(27)	(15)	
	T	397	361	284	196	161	90	50	
		(100)	(91)	(72)	(49)	(41)	(23)	(13)	
No. Rec. AA Degrees									Total Rec. AA Degrees
	M	---	---	---	---	3	6	3	12
Fall, 1970		(100)	---	---	---	(2)	(3)	(2)	(7)
"55"'s	F	219	---	---	---	6	6	13	25
		(100)	---	---	---	(3)	(3)	(6)	(11)
	T	401	---	---	---	9	12	16	37
		(100)	---	---	---	(2)	(3)	(4)	(9)
	M	218	---	---	---	10	8	9	27
Fall, 1967		(100)	---	---	---	(5)	(4)	(4)	(12)
Sample	F	179	---	---	---	16	12	9	37
		(100)	---	---	---	(9)	(7)	(5)	(21)
	T	379	---	---	---	26	20	18	64
		(100)	---	---	---	(6)	(5)	(5)	(16)

FIGURE 1 - Persistence of Fall, 1970 "55" 's and Sample of All Fall, 1967 Entrants

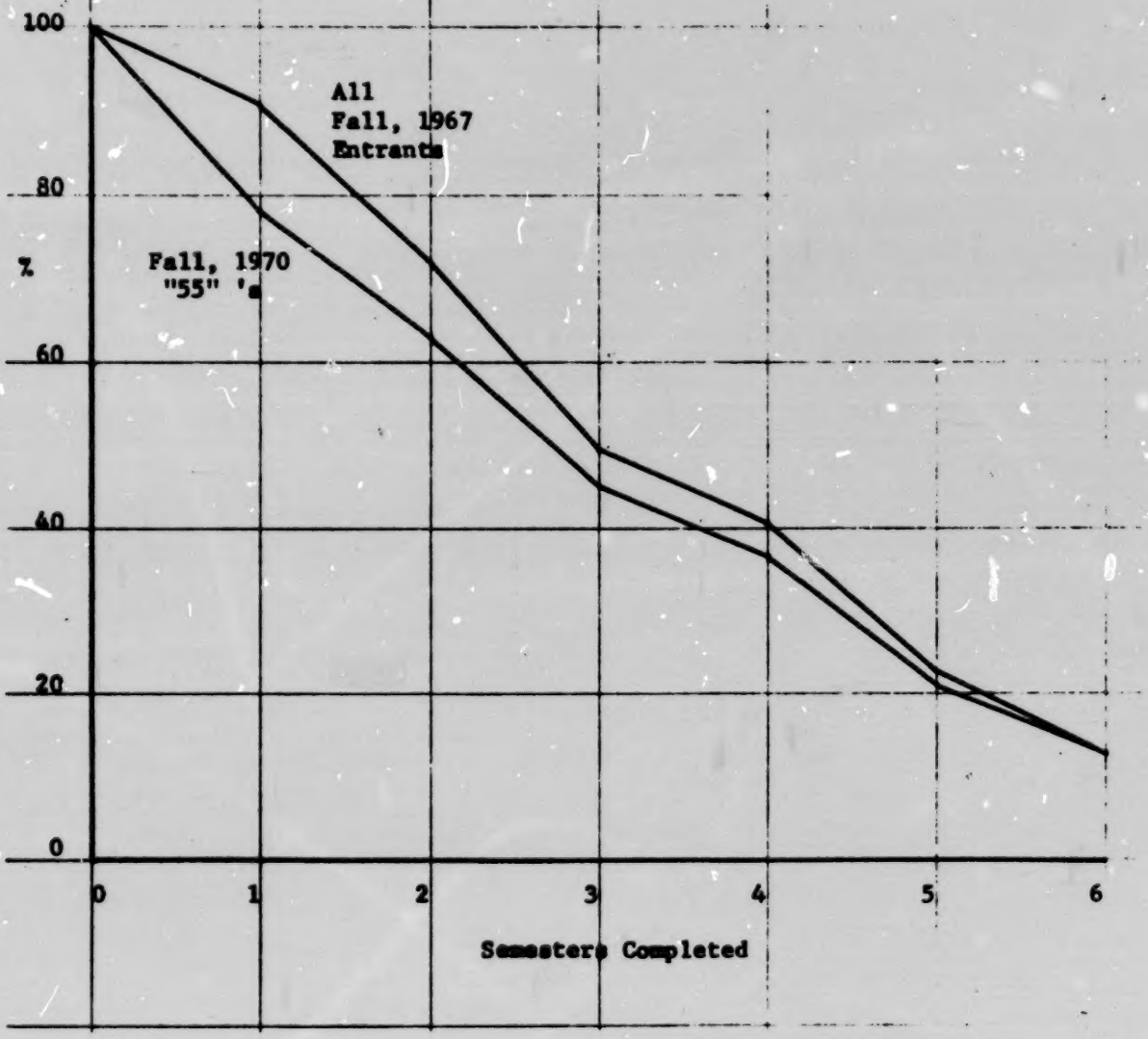

FIGURE 2 - Percents Receiving AA Degree in 4,5,6 Semesters: Fall, 1970 "55" 's and Fall, 1967 Sample of All Day Entrants

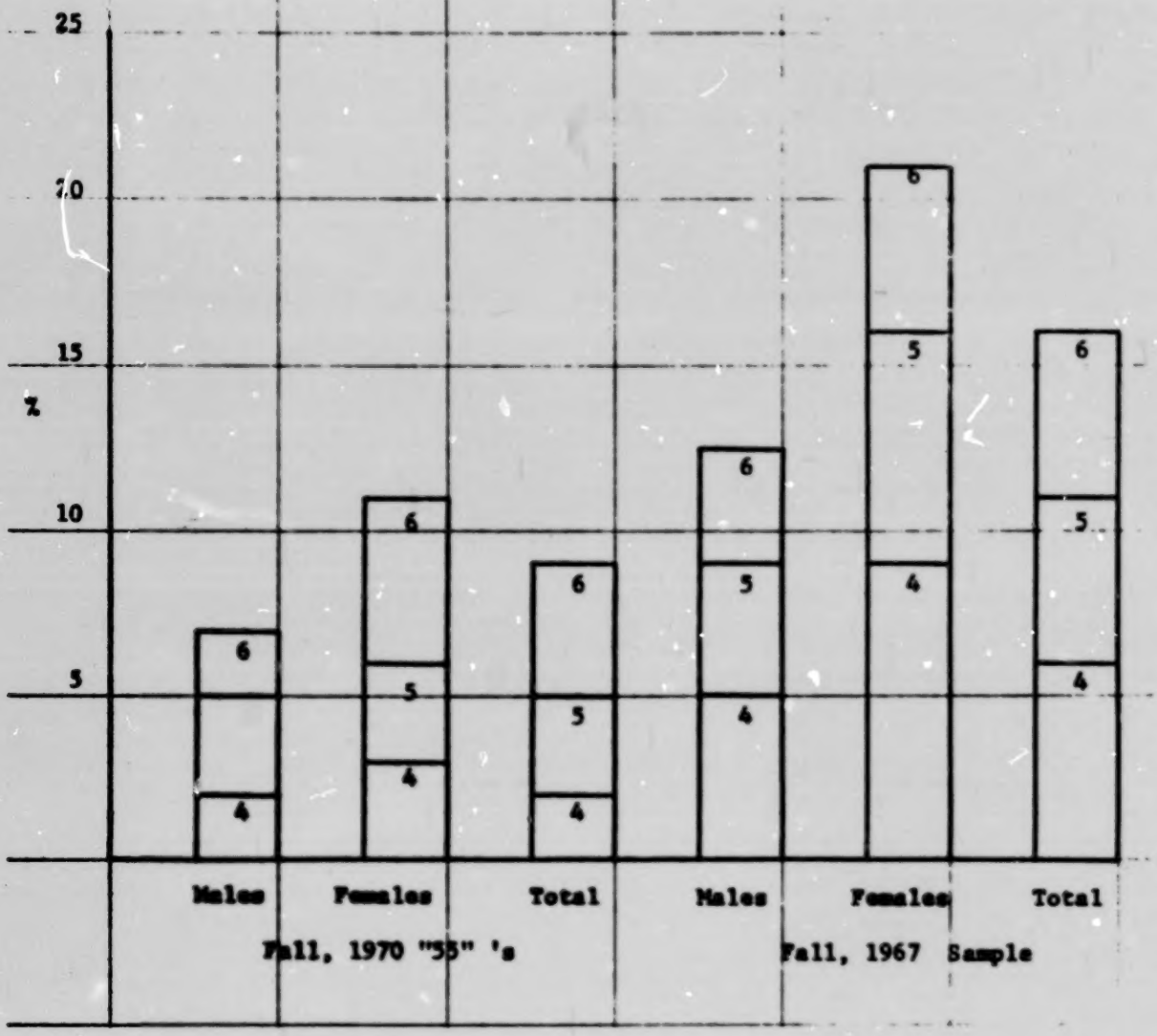

TABLE 3 - Scholarship Record of Fall, 1970 "55" Entrants, According to Number of Semesters Completed

	No. Sems. Compl.	No. of Students	Av. Units Att.	Av. Units Compl.	UC ÷ UA %	GPA
Males	1	30	7.4	6.0	81	1.75
	2	40	16.4	13.0	79	1.61
	3	14	24.5	20.3	82	1.62
	4	26	39.2	36.4	93	2.08
	5	16	51.7	50.0	97	2.21
	6	15	60.1	57.3	95	2.11
TOTAL		141	28.1	25.4	90	1.98
Females	1	29	7.4	5.3	72	1.71
	2	34	15.7	14.2	90	1.83
	3	19	23.0	21.1	92	1.68
	4	37	38.0	34.9	92	2.01
	5	16	54.8	51.3	94	1.98
	6	36	60.5	59.0	98	2.29
TOTAL		171	33.0	30.8	93	2.06
All	1	59	7.4	5.7	76	1.73
	2	74	16.1	13.6	84	1.71
	3	33	23.6	20.7	88	1.65
	4	63	38.5	35.5	92	2.04
	5	32	53.2	50.6	95	2.09
	6	51	60.4	58.5	97	2.24
TOTAL		312	30.8	28.4	92	2.03
Fall, 1967 Sample (6 semester totals)						
	Males	196	33.6	N/A	N/A	2.04
	Females	165	33.5	N/A	N/A	2.21
	TOTAL	361	33.5	N/A	N/A	2.12

TABLE 4 - Numbers of Fall, 1970 "55" Entrants Who Completed (D or Better) "Remedial"* Courses

No. of Semesters Completed		No. of Students	(A) Dev. Comm. Only No.	(%)	(B) English Only No.	(%)	(C) Both Dev. Comm. & English No.	(%)	Total (A+B+C) No.	%
	M	30	9	(30)	7	(23)	0	(0)	16	(53)
1	F	29	12	(41)	1	(4)	0	(0)	13	(45)
	T	59	21	(36)	8	(14)	0	(0)	29	(49)
	M	40	16	(40)	7	(18)	2	(5)	25	(62)
2	F	34	12	(35)	8	(24)	1	(3)	21	(62)
	T	74	28	(32)	15	(20)	3	(4)	46	(62)
	M	14	5	(36)	1	(7)	3	(21)	9	(64)
3	F	19	14	(74)	2	(10)	0	(0)	16	(84)
	T	33	19	(58)	3	(9)	3	(9)	25	(76)
	M	36	11	(42)	7	(27)	3	(12)	21	(81)
4	F	27	9	(24)	9	(24)	10	(27)	28	(76)
	T	63	20	(32)	16	(25)	13	(21)	49	(78)
	M	16	3	(19)	5	(31)	5	(31)	13	(81)
5	F	16	3	(19)	9	(56)	4	(25)	16	(100)
	T	32	6	(19)	14	(44)	9	(28)	29	(91)
	M	15	4	(27)	4	(27)	6	(40)	14	(93)
6	F	36	16	(44)	8	(22)	9	(25)	33	(92)
	T	51	20	(39)	12	(24)	15	(29)	47	(92)
	M	141	48	(34)	31	(22)	19	(14)	98	(70)
ALL	F	171	66	(39)	37	(22)	24	(14)	127	(74)
	T	312	114	(36)	68	(22)	43	(14)	225	(72)
	M	12	2	(17)	5	(42)	5	(42)	12	(100)
Graduates	F	25	8	(32)	5	(21)	7	(28)	20	(83)
Only	T	37	10	(27)	10	(27)	12	(32)	32	(89)

* "Remedial" English includes 21, 40, 61-66

TABLE 5 - Performance in Selected Courses by Fall, 1970 "55" Students

		All "55" 's			"55" Graduates		
		Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Developmental Communications	No.*	70	92	162	7	15	22
	GPA	2.16	2.40	2.29	3.01	3.10	3.07
Remedial English (21,40,61-66)	No*	177	204	381	33	51	84
	GPA	1.93	1.82	1.87	2.64	2.06	2.29
Psychology 20, 21	No.*	20	28	48	2	5	7
	GPA	2.00	2.36	2.31	2.00	2.60	2.42
Mathematics 30	No.*	27	34	61	4	5	9
	GPA	2.00	2.06	2.03	2.50	2.20	2.33
English 1	No. **	14	29	43	5	12	17
	GPA	2.21	1.79	1.93	2.20	2.08	2.12
English 44 or Speech 9 (Foreign)	No. **	15	43	58	2	9	11

* numbers of courses
** numbers of students

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study analyzes LACC records, for a six semester period, of students who took the Guidance Examination in Fall, 1970 and scored in the lowest quintile on both the Vocabulary and Reading sections of the examination, indicating that their reading level was at the eighth grade or lower. These students receive postcards recommending, on the basis of their examination score, that they enroll in Developmental Communications.

Following are some observations on the findings of the study:

(1) 533 (about 11%) of those taking the Fall, 1970 Guidance Examination qualified for this "55" status. Slightly more females than males (12% to 10%) qualified. With regard to high school source, largest percentages were from the inner city schools and the Southern states, indicating that a large number of these students are Black.

(2) Over three-fourths of the students completed some work at LACC, with nearly two-thirds completing a full year, almost a half completing three semesters, and a third completing four semesters. These persistence rates are below those of a random sample of all Fall, 1967 day entrants (78%-91%, 63%-72%, 45%-49%, 36%-41%), but they indicate that a large percentage of the "55" students are able to pursue college work successfully. As with the 1967 sample, females persist at a higher rate than males. 9% of the students had received an AA degree by the end of the three year period, compared with 16% of the 1967 group.

(3) "55" students over the six semester period attempted an average of 31 units and completed 92% of the units attempted, a figure only slightly below that (33.5 UA) of the 1967 sample. Overall grade point average was also just slightly below that of the 1967 sample (2.03-2.12).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS (continued)

(4) Number of semesters completed correlates highly with number of remedial courses taken. For students who completed one through six semesters respectively, the percents of the groups completing at least one remedial course were 49%, 62%, 76%, 78%, 91%, and 92%. 89% of those receiving the AA degree completed at least one remedial course, with 59% completing a course in Developmental Studies.

(5) About one in seven of the "55" students who completed at least one semester completed English 1 sometime during the six semester period. About half of the graduates completed English 1. About 18% of the "55" entrants enrolled in one or both of the communications courses (Speech 9 or English 44) for foreign students. 19% of the graduates were foreign.

This study has not attempted to investigate the effects of specific remedial activities (e.g., various Developmental Communications approaches, tutoring, financial aids), but has simply followed over a three year period those students who entered LACC in Fall, 1970 with a reading level at eighth grade or below, and thus whose expected probability of academic success is low. Persistence rates and scholarship statistics presented above indicate that many of these students are indeed assisted by the "remedial" programs and are able to attain success in the college.

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